

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

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FM AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5364

INFO AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAR ES SALAAM 2471

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: KE, TZ, US

SUBJECT: KENYA-TANZANIA RELATIONS: POSSIBLE US ROLE

REF: (A) DAR ES SALAAM 2375, (B) LAGOS 6744, (C) STATE 135668

1. SUMMARY. EMBASSY CANNOT NOW ASSESS PROSPECTS OF AN ATTEMPT BY NIGERIA TO IMPROVE RELATIONS BETWEEN TANZANIA AND KENYA. IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT US SUPPORT WOULD MAKE A NIGERIAN INITIATIVE MORE ATTRACTIVE TO TANZANIA; IT COULD HAVE THE OPPOSITE EFFECT.THERE APPEAR TO BE INSUFFICIENT US INTERESTS TO WARRANT INVOLVEMENT. END SUMMARY.

2. WHILE TANGOV HAS APPARENTLY AGREED "IN PRINCIPLE" TO NIGERIAN MEDIATION IN DISPUTE WITH KENYA (REF A), WE HAVE SO FAR FOUND LITTLE ENTHUSIASM HERE FOR MEDIATION. TANGOV MAY SEE THIS AS AN INTERCESSION IT CANNOT AVOID. AT SAME TIME WE NOTE REPORT IN LOCAL PRESS JUNE 16 OF TALKS BETWEEN VICE PRESIDENTS JUMBE AND MOI IN SCOTLAND DURING COMMONWEALTH SUMMIT BREAK. JUMBE IS REPORTED TO HAVE TOLD TANZANIAN STUDENTS IN ENGLAND ABOUT HIS CONVERSATION WITH MOI, THAT HE HAD "DISCOVERED THAT, ON THE FACE OF IT, BOTH COUNTRIES WANT THE COMMUNITY."

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3. WE SEE FOLLOWING FACTORS BEARING DIRECTLY ON WHETHER OR NOT US ROLE IN MEDIATION IS DESIRABLE.

A. ATMOSPHERE. TANZANIAN-KENYAN RELATIONS HAVE DETERIORATED REMARKABLY IN THE LAST SIX MONTHS BUT IT IS DOUBTFUL THEY WILL GET MUCH WORSE. THERE COULD BE IMPROVEMENTS IN CERTAIN AREAS.

SOME COOPERATION CONTINUES. DISPUTES ON SPECIFIC ISSUES MAY FLARE UP OCCASIONALLY.

B. US INTERESTS.

(A) EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY. RELATIONS BETWEEN KENYA AND TANZANIA LOOK BAD WHEN COMPARED WITH PREVIOUS COOPERATION WITHIN EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY (EAC). THEY ARE OTHERWISE NOT SO BAD AS TO AFFECT US INTERESTS. US HAS AN INTEREST IN SUPPORTING EAC AS AN EFFECTIVE EXAMPLE OF REGIONAL COOPERATION, BUT THAT COOPERATION HAS NOW REACHED A NADIR AND IT IS DOUBTFULL THAT THERE WILL BE MUCH IMPROVEMENT WHILE KENYA AND TANZANIA REMAIN ON SHARPLY DIVERGENT IDEOLOGICAL COURSES. BEST NIGERIAN MEDIATION COULD PROBABLY ACHIEVE WOULD BE EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF EAC ASSETS AND RE-OPENING OF BORDER TO ALLOW MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE AND PERHAPS SOME TRADE.

(2) BILATERAL. DISPUTE HAS NOT AFFECTED OUR RELATIONS WITH TANZANIA, NOR, AS FAR AS WE KNOW, WITH KENYA. SECURITY OF AREA IS NOT THREATENED. NEITHER SIDE APPEARS GREATLY WORRIED ABOUT A MILITARY THREAT FROM THE OTHER AND THE ESCALATION TO ARMED CONFLICT SEEMS UNLIKELY. NEITHER SIDE APPEARS TO BE DIVERTING ADDITIONAL FUNDS SPECIFICALLY TO MEET MILIARY THREAT OF THE OTHER.

C. ACCEPTABILITY OF MEDIATION.

(1) TANGOV HAS NOT YET MADE CLEAR ITS INTEREST IN IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH KENYA. DISPUTE, ON THIS END, HAS EVOLVED FROM FIT OF PIQUE TO HARD BARGANING FOR SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES (E.G., LAKE CONFIDENTIAL

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STEAMERS) AND PROBABLY EVEN TO POINT WHERE TANGOV SEES BENEFITS TO ITS POLICIES OF SOCIALISM AND SELF-RELIANCE FROM MINIMIZING LINKS WITH "CAPITALIST" KENYA. (SEE DAR ES SALAAM 1718 -- NOTAL.) IN SOME WAYS TANGOV VIEWS ITS DISPUTE WITH KENYA AS A SOCIALIST-CAPITALIST CONFRONTATION.

(2) EMBASSY LAGOS HAS REPORTED THAT IT WAS KENYANS WHO SOUGHT NIGERIAN INTERVENTION (REF B). NIGERIA ACCEPTABLE TO TANGOV BECAUSE IT BELIEVES, FROM EARLIR DISCUSSIONS WITH GARBA IN FEBRUARY, THAT NIGERIA SYMPATHETIC TO TANZANIA'S POSITION. TANZANIAN OFFICIALS HAVE PERSUADED THEMSELVES BORDER CLOSURE HAS SORELY DISADVANTAGED KENYA. WHILE APPROVING OF US INTEREST IN AND SUPPORT FOR THE EAC ITSELF, A VARIETY OF OFFICIALS HAVE MADE CLEAR THEIR BELIEF THAT US HAS GREATER COMMON INTERESTS WITH KENYA IN PRESENT IMPASSE BECAUSE BOTH ARE "CAPITALIST" COUNTRIES. THUS, IF US BECAME INVOLVED IN MEDIATION EFFORT IN ANY WAY, TANGOV LIKELY TO SEE IT AS ATTEMPT TO RESCUE KENYA FROM ITS ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES AND POLITICAL ISOLATION. THIS COULD JEOPARDIZE NIGERIAN EFFORTS.

4. IN VIEW FACTORS DESCRIBED ABOVE, WE SEE LITTLE ADVANTAGE IN PURSUING THE QUESTION OF NIGERIAN MEDIATION WITH ANY OF THE PARTIES CONCERNED. IT IS CONCEIVABLE THAT EVENTS COULD TURN TO THE POINT WHERE A US BLESSING MIGHT BE WARRANTED BUT AT THE MOMENT THE ABSENCE OF US INTERESTS AND THE POSSIBILITY OF ACTUALLY CAUSING SOME DAMAGE ARGUE AGAINST ANY INVOLVEMENT.
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